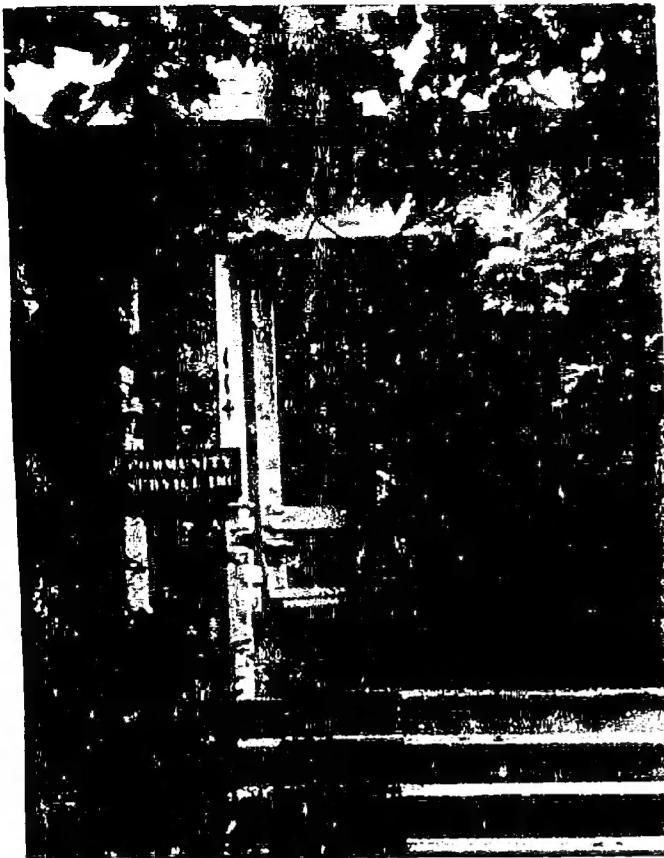


May 1973



# Community Comments Newsletter

## CONTENTS:

What Community Service is Doing  
ARTICLE: And What About the Children?  
BOOK REVIEWS: Two Worlds of Childhood  
A Landscape for Humans  
LETTERS: to Arthur Morgan  
GROUPS AND THINGS  
Conferences comming up..

## WHAT COMMUNITY SERVICE PEOPLE ARE DOING

Years ago Arthur Morgan wrote a Community Comments entitled "Today's Preparation for Tomorrow's Crisis." It defined the need to live and work in terms of a long range perspective which can anticipate and prepare for the eventualities that circumstance brings us, and that does not get lost in the passing enthusiasms and short lived styles of thought and life that will be displaced by others equally momentary in a few months and years to come. Our endeavors reflect this emphasis.

It was but a short time ago that much attention was given to governmental programs such as the Office of Economic Opportunity, Model Cities and Vista. By and large these were superficial palliative programs that built dependence on governmental handouts and self-interested bureaucracies; they alienated those parts of

the community that were not on the receiving end. These programs are now being phased out with very little to show for most of them except for some increased self-respect among minority groups and the poor. Their superficiality made them vulnerable to being written off by the Nixon administration.

Community Service Director Griscom Morgan and Ohio Center Director David Jhnson (a Community Service trustee) have been working with some of the OEO staffs reviewing local and state OEO programs to see what can be salvaged from them as federal funding is ended, and to outline ways in which urban and rural communities can pull themselves together and master their problems in more deepseated and effective ways based on insights such as those we have reported in Community Service literature.

The present wide-spread enthusiasm for "new towns" has also engaged our attention. Peter Kaplan and Griscom have been on the executive committee of the Joint Citizens' New Town Planning Council, a wide based citizens' group concerned with development of the New Town west of Dayton, Ohio. Unfortunately what we've seen happening in this devciopment is similar to what a leading architect of another "New Town" observed, "What the developer does bears little resemblance to what citizens want or planners planned for." For example, no provision is made to separate the town from urban sprawl by a surrounding green belt. The Citizens' Council sponsored a May 10th workshop in Trotwood, Ohio, on the feasibility of employing the Toronto plan of federation of the central city and its surrounding smaller communities as alternative to mass annexation leading to dissolution of the smaller communities,

As members of citizen task forces called by the Yellow Springs Planning Commission, Community Service Staff have been working on limiting real estate development surrounding the village, and revitalizing the economic and social life of the downtown area as the focus of the community. Also we have been involved in trying to keep surrounding farmland in appropriate agricultural use despite high demand for building development.

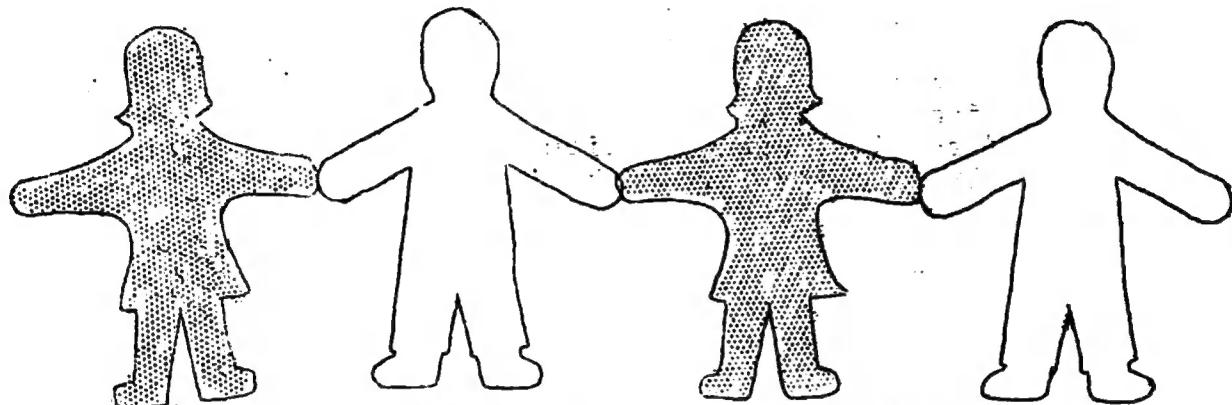
The second annual OCEAN conference--Ohio Caalition for Educational Alternatives Now-- was recently held in Yellow Springs with aid from Community Service Staff. People from public and private schools, free schools and experimental store front schools, explored current experiments, legal problems, curriculum ideas and above all made friends and reinforced each other.

Encouraged and supported by the conference, people from a store front high school in Xenia, Ohio, slated to close with the end of OEO funding, met and developed a program for future action.

Recently the Community Publications Cooperative (Communities magazine) sponsored a Conference on Alternatives in Distribution here in Yellow Springs. Thirty representatives of various small presses, magazines and independent distributors came from all across the country. A newsletter, Alternative Distribution Info, was initiated and an association, Alternative Independent Distributors, was formed. For more on this write Alternative Distribution, Box 223, Yellow Springs, Ohio, 45387.

Arthur Morgan has largely finished his manuscript for his book on the TVA, exciting reading as we who shared in the editing have found it. He is turning his attention to an essay entitled "Who Owns the Earth," arguing that exploitation of natural resources and land values without regard to the human and natural heritage is untenable as social and national policy.

The movement aspect of these various projects particularly impresses us. The fact that there is an elan, a hope and assurance that grows from mutual sharing of experiences, has transformed isolated individuals, groups and communities as they find wider circles of fellowship.



In the United States almost 1/3 of the mothers of preschool children,  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the mothers of children aged 8-14 work outside the home. (1) Women's Liberation has been vocal in questioning the idea that it is only the mother's place to raise her children. More women are desiring time away from their children to pursue their own interests. Parents are becoming interested in their young children learning to play with others and learning that they can get support and affection from other adults. For these reasons child-care has become an important but controversial issue. Many still believe that a mother's place is in the home and that children are best off with their own mother. Many fear placing small children in an "institutional" environment, and having strangers care for their children. For some it smacks of communism, for others there are images of antiseptic, sterile places where children are treated like numbers. Most people have some fears about group care for small children, but group care of and by itself is neither bad nor good. It depends on how it is done. On one extreme it is merely a place to drop off your children because you have to work or, because you want to get away from them, on the other extreme it can be a rich experience in extended family reaching through the whole community. It would seem that the most important factor is parental involvement and control. Community Service has long believed that the raising of children should be a concern of the community as well as of the family and we are encouraged by the increasing interest and potential in child-care centers. We would like to share with you some developments in the area.

The Federal gov't has had an inconsistent history in its concern for child-care. In a typical manner, it has established funds and projects and then shortly dropped them. But one concept which has been actualized is the 4-C Program (COMMUNITY COORDINATED CHILD CARE). The 4-C's are agencies started with gov't support (though no direct funds) which help and encourage communities to set-up and coordinate child-care efforts. They sponsor various types of workshops for those interested in and involved in child-care. The Office of Child Development says that the 4-C program is based on "the premise that quality child-care should become available to those who need it most on a flexibly organized, community-wide basis." (2) We hope the program is as good as it sounds.

Concern for the quality of child care led the state of North Carolina to fund a project child-care center which started in 4 rooms of a church in 1967. Dr. Mary E. Keister, the Project director, has written an interesting pamphlet "The Good Life for Infants and Toddlers" about the center and the children's and parent's reaction to it. 30 children from 3 mo. to 3 years are cared for by 7 staff members. Each child receives much individual attention and also has the freedom to play by himself. Such high health standards are maintained that the sick bay was generally unoccupied. As part of the project, research was conducted comparing the nursery babies to matched "home" babies in the areas of physical-medical, mental-motor-sensory, and emotional-personality development. Keister noted that there was "almost no difference between our control babies and the nursery babies". (3)

Sensing the increasing need and potential, private enterprise has gotten involved in child care. The same people who started Minnie Pearl Chicken developed a short-lived franchise child-care program, . . . resulting in the expression "Kentucky Fried Children". The Singer Co. (the sewing machine people) has developed Singer Learning Centers, which are open educational environments for children aged 3-8. Singer will set up these centers in or near a factory for the employees' children, and the company and its employees split the tuition cost. What we've heard of these types of facilities is, actually impressive. The main drawback is that though they encourage parent involvement they are not really parent controlled.

For a child-care center to be a community center it must be involved with and controlled by the community. More people are getting together to do this. In 1969 a women's group in Toronto obtained a low rental house from the University and started a center for 15-20 children from 2 mo. to 2 years. They have two full time staff, the rest of the staff is composed of parents and volunteers who work in short shifts. Parents are expected to contribute  $\frac{1}{2}$  day/wk or equivalent service. These people "feel that a parent-controlled, cooperative day-care center should be a community which, in a sense, becomes a family, with everyone in that community sharing responsibility for the children and the children relating freely as individuals to each other and to adults". (4) In this coop all parents make decisions as a group.

In discussing community oriented child-care centers we must remember that there are real problems to tackle, one of which is the legal regulations and restrictions. Some others are, the possible tendency toward excessive restrictions in childrens activities and

"antisocial" behavior, less potential opportunities for the children to observe various adult activities because of restriction to one place, less opportunity for the child to have the exclusive attention of an adult, and less opportunity for a child's privacy.

It takes a lot of thought, energy and use of appropriate information and facilities to deal with these problems. One of our staff is involved in an effort to start an infant care center for children from a few months to 3 years, which will compliment the existing Community Children's Center here in Yellow Springs. The above problems are being faced. We hope that as people are trying to break through their isolated conditions and form new social connections, new traditions, new ways of being a community, that group child-care will have a definite place and will form a bond among the people and community involved.

#### Footnotes

1. Ms. vol. 1 no. 11 May 1973 "The Great American Child-Care Disgrace" pg.89.
2. "The Good Life For Infants and Toddlers", Nat'l Ass. for the Education of Young Children, 1970, by Mary E. Keister, Ph.D. pg.21.
3. "Interim Policy Guide for the 4-C Program", HEW, Office of Child Development 1969, pg.1.
4. Handbook; Campus Community Day Care Center, no date or publisher or author pg.4-5.

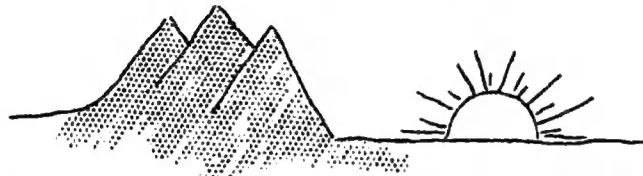
#### BOOK REVIEW . . . TWO WURLDS OF CHILD HOOD by Erie Brofenbrenner

In his Two Worlds of Childhood Urie Bronfenbrenner explores the differences in child rearing between Russia and the United States. His description of a child growing up in Russia high lights some topics for Americans to ponder. As an infant the Russian child has much physical contact from adults; the Government has felt the need to caution mothers from holding their babies too much with the possible result of curvature of the child's spine. The society as a whole exhibits much concern and affection for its young. It is not uncommon for strangers to pick up and hug a child or hold it for its mother. Over 10% of all soviet children under 2 years, and 20% of those between 3-6 years are cared for during the work day in public nurseries where there is one "upbringer" for every four babies. The nurseries have group playpens raised off the floor so the infants are at eye level with the adults. There is a fairly structured program encouraging development from the earliest age, and while there is a very affectionate relationship between the upbringer and the children, self-reliance and cooperative group play are encouraged. As the children move on to school age they are organized into collectives within their classes where they learn to share, and to give and receive help and criticism. As they mature they take on more collective responsibility and mutual discipline. Older classes "adopt" younger classes and shops within factories "adopt" schools. Bronfenbrenner found that the major disciplinary method was what psychologists call "withdrawal of love". This means, if a child has done something "wrong" his parents act very hurt, They let him know that he has disappointed them, and tell him they do not want to be around him.

for awhile, during which time they act very cold to him. Since the adults are normally very warm and supportive, withdrawal of this warmth and support is very effective in "correcting" the child's behavior.

Bronfenbrenner discusses the main factors in the upbringing of American children which include a) the decreased family size resulting in what is commonly called the "nuclear" family (mother, father and a few children, b) lack of strong groups of families, i.e. neighborhoods, c) age segregation and the impact of peer influence on the young, d) and TV. He lists a study done in the sixties which showed that children between the ages of 6-16 spent 22hrs/wk watching television. Age segregation has increased the isolation of the young from the influence of the family, church, school and society in general.

Bronfenbrenner notes studies which indicate that children chose to spend most of their time with their peers, more out of parental default than actual preference of peers. He goes on to discuss the roles of models, social reinforcement and other group effects. His concern (one which we share) is not that we emulate the Soviet Union in their uses of collectivism in child raising, but that we become aware of how we have isolated our children from ourselves and that we adapt more uses of group responsibility for our children. Two Worlds of Childhood was published in 1970 by Russell Sage Foundation and can be obtained in hardback from Community Service for \$7.95.



A LANDSCAPE FOR HUMANS  
by Peter Van Dresser

Here is a concise outline of an ecologic approach to regional planning. A Landscape for Humans uses the upland region of northern New Mexico as an example of the potential for regional development along patterns appropriate to that area's terrain and climate, social and economic make-up.

Peter Van Dresser envisions regional "constellations of organically formed communities" fostering a land and skill-intensive economy providing basic regional self-sufficiency. We must orient our economic institutions and education toward providing for diversified, small-scale primary production. The need for application of new methods in agriculture, manufacturing and general technology is immediate. Emphasis on technologic efficiency must shift to cultivation of human skill and community.

Though Van Dresser writes in general about ecologic planning he gives specific examples of problems in New Mexico and possible solutions drawn from practice elsewhere. Instead of schools for agribusiness and urban oriented vocations we might follow the models of India's Rural Universities or Scandinavia's folk high and technical schools where education was developed directly out of local needs for certain educational values and skills. The old Hispanic culture of New Mexico offers ideas for future plans. What has happened to the mercado, village market? Is it time to revive the ejido, village management of common land? There are solutions to our problems already in practice. A Landscape for Humans cites the problems, outlines a direction of solution and refers to practical models.

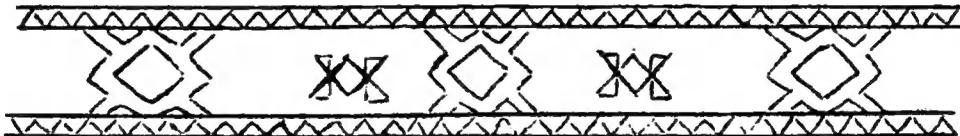
A Landscape for Humans is available from Brotechnic Press, Box 26091, Albuquerque, N.M. or from Community Service for \$3.00.

## LETTERS

William McCarthy was associated with Arthur Morgan in Rural Community Institute in Simcoe County, Ontario, Canada. Recently he wrote to Arthur Morgan concerning how a person who wants to implement social change must be part of the community.

He writes that 20 years ago "One of the questions I discussed with Arthur Morgan was the difficulty a new comer might experience in a community in advocating changes. You spoke of the community as an organism and I remember feeling that my situation, paid by an outside agency to stimulate community action, was far from satisfactory. My work was chiefly with farm people and although I had lived and survived on a farm during the depression years I had become a white-collared person and therefore suspect. This changed completely when my wife and I decided to buy a small farm, both because we missed the farm life and to supplement our income. We then became fully accepted.

Looking back over this period I see the application, consciously or unconsciously, of your philosophy of community. I learned that more could be done if one were an integral part of the community, that arranging meetings and engaging speakers was not the only way to reach people. My most satisfying experience has been as manager of our local Credit Union which grew from a small nucleus of my farm friends in 1947. It, early in its operation, became the most important part of our office activities bringing in people with concrete problems to be dealt with and giving me a sense of reality in my work."



## GROUPS AND THINGS

Man and His Environment is a program offered during fall, winter and spring by the Farm and Wilderness Camps as an extension of their summer camp programs. Since the 1930's the F&W Camps have provided an atmosphere of Quakerism in the Woods, leading many women and men to take part in community living and the resistance movement, among other things. Their address is Farm and Wilderness Foundation, Woodstock, Vermont.

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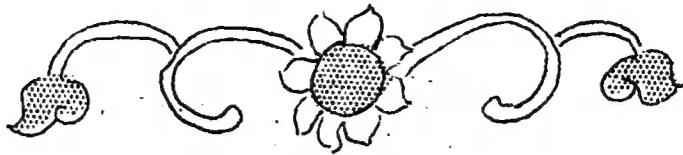
Village of Many Masters, a cooperative community forming with a God focused life of meditation and study. Write: Mrs. Leilani Greenly, P.O. Box 113, No. San Juan, California 95960

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Woodland Hills Foundation, RR1, Sibley, Mo. 64088, offers programs of therapeutic camping and plans to move toward establishing a group home in a community setting.

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No one ever dies who is remembered with love.



Ohio Centre for Group Studies, an Ohio-wide fellowship at 898½ Sunbury Rd., Columbus, Ohio 43219 offers periodic training sessions for community work. On hand for dealing with immediate crisis--environmental disputes, anti-war endeavors--they are now working with the Ohio OEO to see how OEO work might shift gears to continue service to their communities when federal funding ends.

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Toward Freedom, a newsletter on new nations, Room 2013, 343 South Dearborn St., Chicago, Illinois 60604, is a thoughtful review of new nation news in its twenty-third year.

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Foundation for Airborne Relief, has acquired a former oil town complete with office building complexes, shopping center, motel/restaurant, water and sewage system, airstrip and houses. FAR envisions a world wide air relief capability on standby at this town, New Cuyama. Why not fly a hospital to the scene of a typhoon? Their address is 2690 E. Wardlow Rd., Long Beach Airport, California 90807.

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Service Civil International, international voluntary service, Box 9036, Chicago, Illinois 60690. SCI seeks to demonstrate the effectiveness of a voluntary constructive corps as an alternative to armed force in the resolution of social and international conflict.

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Mountain Grove, Glendale, Oregon 97442, sent us their April newsletter. Their record of community experience is inspiring. We are talking about including parts of their newsletter in our new edition of The Intentional Community Handbook.

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A New Edition of THE INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY HANDBOOK is being written right now by Community Service people. We are trying to weave our own thoughts and beliefs with experiences from a wide variety of intentional communities. If you have particular suggestions for the HANDBOOK, we would welcome them. The HANDBOOK has evolved over the last ten years into a fairly well known work. It is our best seller. It still costs only \$1.00!

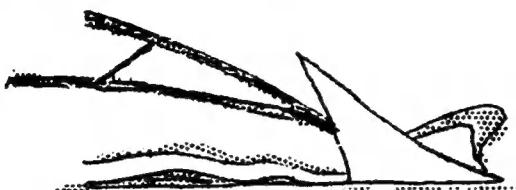
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 The Small Community by Arthur Morgan has come out in a Korean language edition. This is the only edition in print! We hope for a new edition in English. 

John C. Campbell Folk School is located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. It offers a variety of courses in wood-carving, woodworking and weaving from June through October. It is set in a warm family atmosphere with an opportunity to share in creative work and play. The address is The John C. Campbell Folk School, Brasstown, North Carolina 28902.

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Maplevale Organic Farm is going to have four Organic Earth-skills workshops this year, in June, July, August and September. They also publish a quarterly Newsletter called NORTHWIND for \$3.00 per year. To find out more about this place write to Hal and Judy Hinds, Maplevale Organic Farm, Cross Creek, N.B. Canada.



Koinonia Partners was started in 1942 by Clarence and Florence Jordan and Martin and Mabel England. They had a vision of a Christian Community where men and women could come to share life and experiment with some new forms of discipleship to Jesus. They settled in Sumter County, Georgia on a 400 acre run-down farm and went to work. The Englands left after a couple of years but the Jordans stayed. Others came. The farm grew and prospered. Then came persecution, frustration-- and near collapse.

Today Koinonia Partners is prospering again. Many people are aware of their delicious fruit cakes and pecans, and now they have added handcrafts, (cloths, patchwork, macrame, notecards, batik) to their list of things for sale.

Another undertaking, that excited us is their Partnership Housing, which is an effort to give the poor a decent place to live. Many families in the south are paying around \$75.00 a month for shacks without electricity or plumbing. In Partnership Housing they obtain good housing and are required to repay the cost of the house over a twenty year period at no interest (average monthly cost of \$25 to \$35) and they are encouraged to share with the fund above this amount if they are able to in order to help some one else get out of a shack.

If you are interested in contacting them their address is Koinonia Products, Route 2, Americus, Georgia 31709.

CONFERENCES COMING UP

Lime Saddle, Rt. 1, Box 191, Oroville, Cal. 95965, June 15-17. Exploring ideas of a Communitarian Village.

Twin Oaks, Louisa, Virginia, 23093, first week in July.

Community Service, Box 243, Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387,  
August 3,4 and 5.

Chippewa River Conference, 1330 Vilas Avenue, Madison,  
Wisconsin 53715, July 1-9

Labor Day at School of Living, Heathcote Center, Freeland, Md.

COMMUNITY SERVICE, INC.  
BOX 243  
YELLOW SPRINGS, OHIO 45387